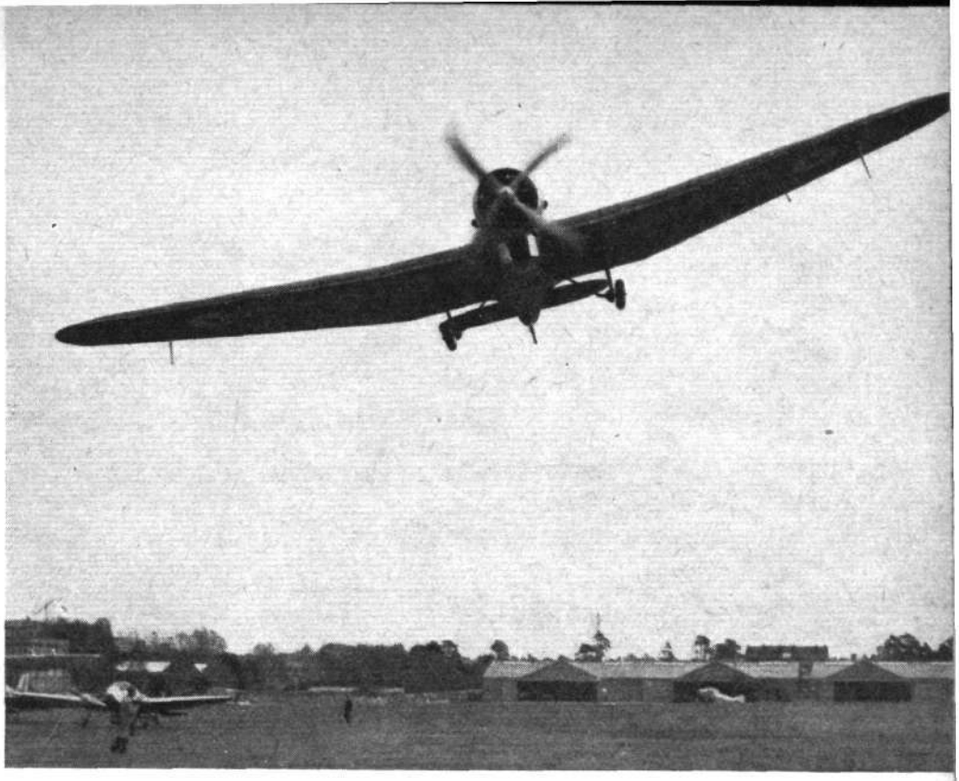
HEIGHT RECORD HOME AGAIN

Bristol 138 (Pegasus Special), Flown by Flt. Lt. M. J. Adam, Reaches 53,937 ft.



TO top the mélange of Britain's recent demonstrations of aeronautical eminence, Flt. Lt. M. J. Adam, a pilot of the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, has broken the world's altitude record, previously held by the Italian, Lieutenant-Colonel Mario Pezzi with 51,362 ft., by taking the Bristol 138 monoplane to 53,937 ft. (16,440 m.). Our margin is thus 2,575 ft.

This is the second successful attempt by the R.A.F. to capture the record, and crowns a period of intensive preparatory flying by Flt. Lt. Adam.

The aircraft was the machine in which Sqn. Ldr. F. R. D. Swain gained the previous British record of 49,944 ft. last autumn. A few minor modifications have been made since that time, including the fitting of smaller wheels and the deletion of the brakes.

Flt. Lt. Adam wore the same pattern of pressure suit as that used by Sqn. Ldr. Swain, but this, too, was improved in detail with a view to eliminating the frosting of the visor portion. He was in the air for two and a quarter hours, his performance being all the more meritorious because of the prevailing weather conditions. In the upper regions Flt. Lt. Adam encountered a fierce westerly gale, and unbroken cloud formations blotted out his view of the earth for long periods.

The triumphant Bristol 138 monoplane is stationed at the R.A.E., Farnborough, where it is seen flying above. On the left, Flt. Lt. Adam is insinuating himself into the pressure suit, and in the third view is seen discussing chances with Wing Cdr. J. W. Woodhouse. (*Flight* photographs.)